REMARKS

Introduction

Claims 1 - 68 were originally pending in this application. In response to a Restriction Requirement, claims 51 - 58 were withdrawn from consideration in this application and thereafter cancelled. Claims 1, 3, 26, and 28 have been amended herein. Claims 2 and 27 have been cancelled herein. Accordingly, claims 1, 3 – 26, and 28 – 50 remain pending in this application.
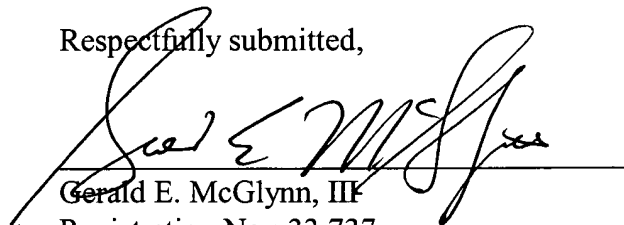
Claim Rejections

35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Gago '111 patent. The applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. On the other hand, the Examiner indicated that claims 2 – 25 and 27 – 50 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

With the Examiner's comments in mind, independent claims 1 and 26 have been amended to include the limitations formerly set forth in claims 2 and 27, respectively. Claims 3 and 28 have been amended to change their dependency to claims 1 and 26, respectively. The applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1 and 26, as amended, now recite structure that is not disclosed or suggested by the references of record in this case. Claims 3 – 25 and 28 – 50 are all ultimately dependent upon independent claims 1 and 26 and add further perfecting limitations to the invention described in independent claims 1 and 26.

Conclusion

In view of the above, the applicants respectfully submit that the claims, as amended, clearly distinguish over the prior art and are therefore allowable. Accordingly, applicants respectfully solicit the allowance of the claims pending in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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